

CLAIMS

1. A visual communication system comprising:
a camera for capturing images;
an electronic display for displaying said images captured by said camera;
a communication interface for communicating said captured images; and
a rugged casing protecting said electronic display, said camera, and said
communication interface.

2. The visual communication system of claim 1 further comprising:
an illumination source for use with said camera.

3. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said
communication interface includes:
a transmitter for facilitating wireless communication.

4. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said
communication interface supports multimedia communication.

5. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said camera
is moveable independent from said electronic display and said communication
interface.

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6. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said camera is miniaturized.

7. The visual communication system of claim 1 further comprising:
a microphone for facilitating verbal communication from a user of said system; and
a speaker for playing remote audio signals received by said communication interface.

8. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said communication interface includes:

a signal processor for communicating images captured by said camera.

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9. A method for remotely monitoring services comprising the steps of:

establishing a network connection between a service provider and a customer;

visually capturing images of services provided by said service provider;

communicating said images to said customer over said network connection; and

reinforcing equipment used in said establishing, visually capturing, and communicating steps.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:

displaying said captured images to said service provider.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein said communicating step further comprises the steps of:

processing said images; and

wirelessly transmitting said processed images to said customer.

12. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:

establishing a voice communication link between said service provider and said customer.

13. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:
illuminating said captured images.

14. The method of claim 9 wherein said captured images comprise
multimedia data.

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15. A remote monitoring system comprising:
means for capturing visual images;
means connected to said system for displaying said captured visual
images;
means for communicating said captured visual images; and
means for ruggedly encasing said system.

16. The system of claim 15 further comprising:
means for illuminating said visual images for capturing.

17. The system of claim 15 wherein said means for communicating
includes:
means for wirelessly transmitting said captured visual images.

18. The system of claim 15 further comprising:
means for processing said captured visual images.

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